

What is claimed is:

1. A method for detecting an antibody wherein an examination of a disease caused by an exogenous antigen is conducted,

5 said exogenous antigen being an antigen having a property in which the class switching from the IgM antibody to the IgG antibody of immunoglobulin antibodies raised against said antigen is achieved after two months following the appearance of the IgM antibody,

10 said method comprising detecting the IgM antibody to said exogenous antigen.

2. The method for detecting an antibody according to claim 1 wherein the detection of the antibody to said exogenous antigen is carried out by detecting the IgM antibody alone, or
15 concurrently detecting the IgM antibody and IgG antibody.

3. The method for detecting an antibody according to claim 1 wherein said exogenous antigen is a microorganism, virus and/or proteinous substance which may be the cause of a disease of a human or of a mammal other than humans.

20 4. The method for detecting an antibody according to claim 1 wherein said exogenous antigen is Borna disease virus (BDV).

5. A method for detecting an antibody wherein an examination of a disease caused by Borna disease virus (BDV)
25 is conducted,

said method comprising detecting the IgM antibody alone, or concurrently detecting the IgM antibody and IgG antibody which is(are) raised against the virus.

6. The method for detecting an antibody according to claim 1 wherein said method for detecting an antibody is an immune agglutination reaction method.

7. The method for detecting an antibody according to 5 claim 6 wherein said immune agglutination reaction method is a fine particle counting immunoassay method.

8. A reagent for detecting an anti-BDV antibody which has an antigen polypeptide selected from the p10 region of a Borna disease virus (BDV) protein.

10 9. The reagent for detecting an anti-BDV antibody wherein the antigen polypeptide according to claim 8 comprises an antigen polypeptide has at least 8 amino acids.

10. The reagent for detecting an anti-BDV antibody wherein the antigen polypeptide according to claim 8 has a 15 polypeptide which includes an amino acid sequence set out in SEQ ID NO: 5, 6, 7 or 8.

11. A method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody wherein the antigen polypeptide according to claim 8 is used.

12. A method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody 20 wherein the antigen polypeptide according to claim 8, and an antigen polypeptide selected from the p24 region and/or p40 region of a Borna disease virus (BDV) protein are used.

13. The method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody 25 wherein the antigen polypeptide from the p24 region according to claim 12 has a polypeptide including an amino acid sequence set out in SEQ ID NO: 1 or 2.

14. The method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody 30 wherein the antigen polypeptide from the p40 region according to claim 12 has of a polypeptide including an amino acid sequence set out in SEQ ID NO: 3 or 4.

15. The method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody according to claim 11 wherein said method for detecting an anti-BDV antibody is an immune agglutination reaction method.

16. The method for detecting an antibody according to
5 claim 15 wherein said immune agglutination reaction method is a fine particle counting immunoassay method.